

S E A S O

N S A L W

A Y S C H

A N G E

P R E S B Y
T E R Y W O
R S H I P A
U T U M N



AUTUMN SONG BY MARY OLIVER

Don't you imagine the leaves dream now
how comfortable it will be to touch
the earth instead of the
nothingness of the air and the endless
freshets of wind? And don't you think
the trees, especially those with
mossy hollows, are beginning to look for

the birds that will come - six, a dozen — to sleep
inside their bodies? And don't you hear
the goldenrod whispering goodbye,
the everlasting being crowned with the first
tuffets of snow? The pond
stiffens and the white field over which
the fox runs so quickly brings out
its long blue shadows. The wind wags
its many tails. And in the evening
the piled firewood shifts a little,
longing to be on its way.



GATHERING

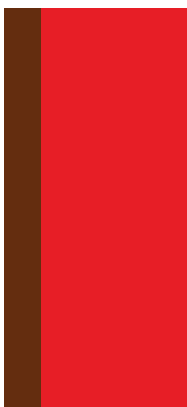
Time of Preparation

Song / 'For the Beauty of the Earth' (trad.)

Greeting and Gathering

Confession and Pardon

Song / 'Marvelous Grace of our Loving Lord' (trad.)



THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Readings / Joel 2:12-13; I Kings 19:9-13; Psalm 42

Sitting with the Word Together

Song / 'Still, My Soul Be Still' (Getty)



THE TABLE

Invitation to the Table

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Breaking of Bread

Sharing of Communion

Prayer after Communion



SENDING

Song / 'Abide With Me' (Groves)

Benediction

Time of Transition

REFLECTING

What in your ministry has come to its ripeness this year — the thing you can finally call finished, or nearly so? How does the quality of this ripe fruit make you feel?

Name one thing in your ministry God is asking you to release.

Tertullian called autumn *tentator valetudinum* — the tester of health. Not sickness itself, but the thing that reveals what health you actually have. What has this year tested in you, and what did it find?

Autumn pulls the sap back down into the root, and trees and plants move inward in preparation for winter. How might you allow this season to help you move inward as you reflect and prepare for what comes next?